

Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

P.O. Box 25506, San Mateo, CA 94402

Name of interviewee: Feher, Robert

Date of interview: 7/19, 8/15, 9/5, 9/11 & 10/23/1990

Summary: Robert Fehér was born Joseph Fehér on February 6, 1931. He was born to Béla Fehér and Sarah Mondel in Székesfehérvár, Hungary. His mother lived a very orthodox kosher life, and his father the opposite. He states he lived a comfortable early life. He first remembered anti-Semitism through rumors that people would talk about. He heard about what they were doing to Polish Jews, but didn't really believe it since it was quite far away. But when he went to school, Gentiles would tell him that it was the people of his religion, the Jewish people, who killed Jesus. He was about 11 or 12 when he first remembered being different from other people. He did have many Christian friends because he considered himself a "tough guy" who fought and stood up for himself.

Then when he was around 14 the Nazis occupied Hungary and his family was taken. He was able to obtain false identification papers by fooling other Nazi kids. With the little money his mother left him before her capture, about \$40, he bought a Nazi uniform. Now with his fake identity as a German he hid in cellars around Budapest. He then would join the Nazi youth. Had several close encounters with Nazis where they questioned his identity, one even asked him to "show me your penis." Fortunately a bomb fell on the building next door and hurt the guard. Worked in the ghetto of Budapest. Survived by finding scraps around, lived with his uncle for a while, fought with Nazi officers and brought food to other Jewish prisoners. When his father came back from a "notice camp" they lived in a 'yellow star house.' This is where it was crowded with several families to a room.

He and his family were liberated by the Russians in May 1945. He went back to Germany to volunteer, then to Israel to volunteer and help with the doings. He would do this for about two years. His family stayed in Hungary. His father became an officer and speaker for the country. Robert was discovered as a singer and a promoter moved him to Vienna to start a career. He states he was on several TV shows and appearances. Then in 1961 he moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin with his family. There he became a successful salesman and broker.